A1475-11.1

ADA American Dental Association

The Bureau of Economic and Behavioral Research

211 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

The 1987 Survey of Dental Practice

General Characteristics of Dentists

February, 1988

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS FOR THE YEAR OF 1986

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HIGHLIGHTS

* Approximately 19 percent of all private practitioners are under the age of 35; roughly half (52.1%) are under the age of 45; while 8.5% are 65 years of age or older.

* Almost two-thirds (59.8%) of current practitioners graduated from dental school since 1965; 31.9% graduated from dental school since 1975, and 13.2% graduated since 1980.

* The solo dentist practice is the most typical size of private practice, comprising 70.5% of the dental population.

* The mean age of all private practitioners is 46.1 years; for dentists graduating since 1980, the mean age is 30.6 years.

* The majority of the nation's private practitioners practice dentistry on a full-time basis.

* Over half, 56.1%, of nonowner dentists graduated from dental school since 1980. Three-quarters, 73.1%, have graduated since 1975, while 27.0% graduated before 1975.

INTRODUCTION

This report provides descriptive statistics from the 1987 Survey of Dental Practice on the general characteristics of private practitioners in the United States for the year 1986. Some of the areas summarized are age, region (U.S. census), and graduation year distributions. Certain statistics pertaining to the size of the dental practice and hours spent in the practice on a weekly and yearly basis are also reported.

Tables are presented separately for all dentists (private practitioners), independent (owner) dentists, solo dentists, employed dentists, and dentists graduating since 1980. Each section is preceded by a brief summary citing statistics on all responding dentists in a given category. The tables present detailed data broken down by general practitioner and specialist status for each of the five categories.

ALL DENTISTS

Of all private practitioners, 18.7% are under the age of 35. Roughly half (52.1%) are under the age of 45, while 8.5% are 65 years of age or older.

Of the nine U.S. census regions, the higher concentrations of private practitioners occur in the Middle and South Altantic regions (17.5% and 18.0%), while the lowest concentrations occur in the West North Central and Mountain regions (5.2% and 5.6%).

Three-fifths (59.8%) of private practitioners have graduated from dental school since 1965, but only 13.2% have graduated since 1980.

The most typical size of private practice is the solo practice, with 70.5% of the private practitioners working with no other dentist.

Approximately 12.3% of the private practitioners work in a practice with two or more other dentists.

The mean age of all private practitioners is 46.1 years. For male practitioners, who comprise 97.2% of all private practitioners, the mean age is 46.4 years; while for female practitioners, representing only 2.8% of all practitioners, the mean age is 36.2 years.

Private practitioners spend, on average, 42.5 hours per week in the practice, 32.8 of which are spent treating patients. The average number of weeks worked per year is 47.3. On an annual basis, 2018.2 hours are spent in the practice while 1558.9 hours are spent treating patients (about 77.2%).

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS ALL DENTISTS

DENTIST AGE, REGION, AND GRADUATION YEAR DISTRIBUTION

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
AGE GROUP						
LESS THAN 30 YEARS	128	6.0	8	2.2	135	5.5
30-34 YEARS	306	14.5	20	5.5	326	13.2
35-39 YEARS	386	18.3	52	14.1	438	17.7
40-44 YEARS	310	14.7	79	21.5	389	15.7
45-49 YEARS	203	9.6	69	18.9	272	11.0
50-54 YEARS	214	10.2	46	12.6	261	10.5
55-59 YEARS	202	9.6	41	11.3	243	9.8
60-64 YEARS	175	8.3	27	7.3	202	8.1
65 YEARS AND OLDER	186	8.8	25	6.8	211	8.5
REGION						
NEW ENGLAND	143	6.8	29	7.8	172	6.9
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	370	17.5	72	19.7	443	17.9
SOUTH ATLANTIC	380	18.0	61	16.6	441	17.8
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	174	8.2	19	5.3	193	7.8
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	283	13.4	59	16.1	342	13.8
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	111	5.2	18	4.8	128	5.2
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	192	9.1	27	7.5	219	8.8
MOUNTAIN	115	5.5	22	6.1	138	5.6
PACIFIC	342	16.2	60	16.2	402	16.2
GRADUATION YEAR						
BEFORE 1965	831	39.4	166	45.4	997	40.2
1965-1974	541	25.6	150	40.9	691	27.9
1975-1980	427	20.2	37	10.1	464	18.7
AFTER 1980	313	14.8	13	3.6	326	13.2
ALL	2111	100.0	367	100.0	2478	100.0

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS — ALL DENTISTS

SIZE OF PRIVATE PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER
PRACTICE SIZE						
NO OTHER DENTISTS (SOLOS)	71.16	1507	66.89	247	70.53	1754
ONE OTHER DENTIST	16.84	357	18.78	69	17.13	426
TWO OR MORE OTHER DENTISTS	11.99	254	14.33	53	12.34	307
ALL	100.00	2118	100.00	369	100.00	2486

MEAN HOURS SPENT IN PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL-WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
WEEKS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	47.52	1876	46.33	607	47.34	2483
HOURS PER WEEK SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	42.59	1876	41.82	607	42.47	2483
HOURS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	2030.95	1876	1945.10	607	2018.22	2483
HOURS PER WEEK TREATING PATIENTS	33.05	1876	31.41	607	32.81	2483
HOURS PER YEAR TREATING PATIENTS	1576.09	1876	1460.43	607	1558.94	2483

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS ALL DENTISTS

MEAN AND MEDIAN AGE BY GENDER AND DENTIST TYPE

	TYPE OF DENTIST											
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER				SPECIALIST				ALL-WEIGHTED			
	AGE				AGE				AGE			
	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N
GENDER												
MALE	46.2	44	96.5	1810	47.6	46	99.3	603	46.4	44	97.2	2413
FEMALE	35.9	33	3.5	66	45.8	48	.7	4	36.2	33	2.8	70
ALL-WEIGHTED	45.8	43	100.0	1876	47.6	46	100.0	607	46.1	44	100.0	2483

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

Of all independent dentists, 15.5% are under the age of 35. Half (50.0%) are under the age of 45, while 8.8% are 65 years of age or older.

Over half (58.1%) of the independent practitioners graduated from dental school since 1965, while only 9.8% have graduated since 1980.

Among independents, the most typical size of private practice is the solo practice, with 75.9% of the private practitioners working with no other dentist. About 9.2% of independent dentists work in a practice with two or more dentists.

The mean age of all independent practitioners is 46.8 years. For male practitioners, who comprise 98.1% of independent practitioners, the mean age is 47.0 years; while female practitioners, representing only 1.9% of all independent practitioners, have an average age of 37.4 years.

Independent practitioners spend, on average, 42.6 hours per week in the practice, 32.9 of which are spent treating patients. The average number of weeks worked per year is 47.3. On an annual basis, 2023.1 hours are spent in the practice while 1562.0 hours are spent treating patients (about 77.2%).

DENTIST AGE, REGION, AND GRADUATION YEAR DISTRIBUTION

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
AGE GROUP						
LESS THAN 30 YEARS	70	3.6	6	1.7	76	3.3
30-34 YEARS	261	13.4	19	5.4	280	12.2
35-39 YEARS	369	18.9	49	14.0	418	18.2
40-44 YEARS	298	15.3	77	21.8	375	16.3
45-49 YEARS	198	10.1	68	19.4	266	11.5
50-54 YEARS	211	10.8	46	13.1	257	11.2
55-59 YEARS	195	10.0	39	11.1	234	10.2
60-64 YEARS	167	8.6	25	7.1	192	8.3
65 YEARS AND OLDER	179	9.2	22	6.4	202	8.8
REGION						
NEW ENGLAND	130	6.7	26	7.3	155	6.8
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	334	17.1	70	20.1	405	17.6
SOUTH ATLANTIC	343	17.6	56	16.1	400	17.4
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	161	8.3	19	5.5	181	7.9
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	263	13.5	56	15.9	319	13.9
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	108	5.6	18	5.0	126	5.5
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	182	9.3	26	7.4	208	9.0
MOUNTAIN	108	5.6	22	6.4	131	5.7
PACIFIC	318	16.3	57	16.3	375	16.3
GRADUATION YEAR						
BEFORE 1965	805	41.3	160	45.5	965	41.9
1965-1974	527	27.1	146	41.7	674	29.3
1975-1980	403	20.7	34	9.7	437	19.0
AFTER 1980	213	11.0	11	3.1	224	9.8
ALL	1948	100.0	351	100.0	2299	100.0

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS — INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

SIZE OF PRIVATE PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER
PRACTICE SIZE						
NO OTHER DENTISTS (SOLOS)	77.01	1505	69.88	247	75.92	1751
ONE OTHER DENTIST	14.38	281	17.56	62	14.87	343
TWO OR MORE OTHER DENTISTS	8.61	168	12.56	44	9.21	213
ALL	100.00	1954	100.00	353	100.00	2307

MEAN HOURS SPENT IN PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL-WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
WEEKS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	47.50	1731	46.27	581	47.31	2312
HOURS PER WEEK SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	42.73	1731	41.98	581	42.62	2312
HOURS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	2036.23	1731	1950.20	581	2023.08	2312
HOURS PER WEEK TREATING PATIENTS	33.15	1731	31.54	581	32.90	2312
HOURS PER YEAR TREATING PATIENTS	1579.57	1731	1464.66	581	1561.99	2312

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

MEAN AND MEDIAN AGE BY GENDER AND DENTIST TYPE

	TYPE OF DENTIST											
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER				SPECIALIST				ALL-WEIGHTED			
	AGE				AGE				AGE			
	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N
GENDER												
MALE	46.8	44	97.6	1690	47.6	46	99.3	577	47	45	98.1	2267
FEMALE	37	35	2.4	41	45.8	48	.7	4	37.4	35	1.9	45
ALL-WEIGHTED	46.6	44	100.0	1731	47.6	46	100.0	581	46.8	45	100.0	2312

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

SOLO DENTISTS

Most dentists (70.5%) are solo practitioners. Of all solo dentists, 14.3% are under the age of 35. Almost half (47.5%) are under the age of 45, while 10.0% are 65 years of age or older.

Over half (55.9%) of all solo practitioners graduated from dental school since 1965, while 8.6% graduated from dental school since 1980.

The mean age of all solo practitioners is 47.5 years. For male practitioners, who comprise 98.6% of solo practitioners, the mean age is 47.6 years; for female practitioners, who represent 1.4% of all solo practitioners, the mean age is 39.6 years.

Solo practitioners spend, on average, 42.4 hours per week in the practice, 32.7 of which are spent treating patients. The average number of weeks worked per year is 47.4. On an annual basis, 2015.4 hours are spent in the practice while 1554.1 hours are spent treating patients (about 77.1%).

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS

DENTIST AGE, REGION, AND GRADUATION YEAR DISTRIBUTION

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
AGE GROUP						
LESS THAN 30 YEARS	44	2.9	3	1.2	47	2.7
30-34 YEARS	187	12.5	14	5.7	201	11.6
35-39 YEARS	269	17.9	28	11.4	297	17.0
40-44 YEARS	231	15.4	50	20.6	282	16.2
45-49 YEARS	154	10.2	47	19.4	201	11.5
50-54 YEARS	166	11.1	32	13.2	198	11.4
55-59 YEARS	163	10.9	30	12.4	193	11.1
60-64 YEARS	130	8.7	21	8.4	150	8.6
65 YEARS AND OLDER	155	10.3	19	7.7	173	10.0
REGION						
NEW ENGLAND	87	5.8	16	6.7	103	5.9
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	242	16.1	43	17.6	285	16.3
SOUTH ATLANTIC	271	18.1	34	13.9	305	17.5
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	121	8.1	14	5.7	135	7.7
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	216	14.4	41	16.6	256	14.7
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	87	5.8	13	5.2	100	5.7
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	147	9.8	20	8.2	167	9.6
MOUNTAIN	88	5.9	18	7.4	106	6.1
PACIFIC	240	16.1	46	18.6	286	16.4
GRADUATION YEAR						
BEFORE 1965	650	43.4	120	49.1	770	44.2
1965-1974	408	27.2	97	39.7	505	29.0
1975-1980	297	19.8	21	8.7	318	18.3
AFTER 1980	143	9.6	6	2.5	149	8.6
ALL	1498	100.0	245	100.0	1743	100.0

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS — SOLO DENTISTS

MEAN HOURS SPENT IN PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL-WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
WEEKS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	47.59	1332	46.41	404	47.42	1736
HOURS PER WEEK SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	42.52	1332	41.41	404	42.36	1736
HOURS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	2029.53	1332	1928.63	404	2015.38	1736
HOURS PER WEEK TREATING PATIENTS	32.96	1332	30.82	404	32.66	1736
HOURS PER YEAR TREATING PATIENTS	1573.40	1332	1435.78	404	1554.09	1736

MEAN AND MEDIAN AGE BY GENDER AND DENTIST TYPE

	TYPE OF DENTIST											
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER				SPECIALIST				ALL-WEIGHTED			
	AGE				AGE				AGE			
	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N
GENDER												
MALE	47.4	45	98.3	1310	48.6	47	99.3	401	47.6	46	98.6	1711
FEMALE	39	35	1.7	22	48.7	48	.7	3	39.6	36	1.4	25
ALL-WEIGHTED	47.3	45	100.0	1332	48.6	47	100.0	404	47.5	46	100.0	1736

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

EMPLOYED DENTISTS

Of all employed dentists, 58.9% are under the age of 35, while 77.4% are under the age of 45. Only 3.9% are 65 years of age or older.

Over half (56.1%) of all employed practitioners have graduated from dental school since 1980. Roughly 82% have graduated from dental school since 1965, while 17.7% graduated before 1965.

Of all employed dentists, just under half (43.7%) work in a practice with only one other dentist, the remaining work in larger dental offices.

The mean age of all employed practitioners is 37.3 years. For male practitioners, who comprise 85.7% of employed practitioners, the mean age is 38.1 years; for female practitioners, who represent 14.3% of all employed practitioners, the mean age is 32.6 years.

Employed practitioners spend, on average, 41.4 hours per week in the practice, 32.1 of which are spent treating patients. The average number of weeks worked per year is 47.5. On an annual basis, 1988.1 hours are spent in the practice while 1539.2 hours are spent treating patients (about 77.4%).

DENTIST AGE, REGION, AND GRADUATION YEAR DISTRIBUTION

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
AGE GROUP						
LESS THAN 30 YEARS	40	36.8	1	6.3	40	34.3
30-34 YEARS	28	26.3	1	6.3	29	24.6
35-39 YEARS	10	9.5	1	12.5	11	9.7
40-44 YEARS	9	8.4	1	12.5	10	8.8
45-49 YEARS	6	5.3	1	12.5	7	5.9
50-54 YEARS	2	2.1	0	0	2	1.9
55-59 YEARS	5	4.2	2	25.0	7	5.9
60-64 YEARS	5	4.2	1	12.5	6	4.9
65 YEARS AND OLDER	3	3.2	1	12.5	5	3.9
REGION						
NEW ENGLAND	9	8.4	2	25.0	11	9.8
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	24	22.1	1	12.5	25	21.3
SOUTH ATLANTIC	27	25.3	2	25.0	30	25.2
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	6	5.3	0	0	6	4.8
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	12	11.6	2	18.8	14	12.2
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	2	2.1	0	0	2	1.9
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	7	6.3	1	12.5	8	6.8
MOUNTAIN	7	6.3	0	0	7	5.8
PACIFIC	14	12.6	1	6.3	14	12.1
GRADUATION YEAR						
BEFORE 1965	16	14.7	5	50.0	21	17.7
1965-1974	9	8.4	2	18.8	11	9.3
1975-1980	18	16.8	2	18.8	20	17.0
AFTER 1980	64	60.0	1	12.5	66	56.1
ALL	107	100.0	10	100.0	117	100.0

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS EMPLOYED DENTISTS

SIZE OF PRIVATE PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER
PRACTICE SIZE						
ONE OTHER DENTIST	44.79	49	31.25	3	43.68	52
TWO OR MORE OTHER DENTISTS	55.21	60	68.75	7	56.32	67
ALL	100.00	108	100.00	10	100.00	118

MEAN HOURS SPENT IN PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL-WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
WEEKS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	47.55	96	47.44	16	47.54	112
HOURS PER WEEK SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	41.53	96	40.08	16	41.41	112
HOURS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	1994.08	96	1921.68	16	1988.13	112
HOURS PER WEEK TREATING PATIENTS	32.17	96	30.87	16	32.06	112
HOURS PER YEAR TREATING PATIENTS	1544.19	96	1484.06	16	1539.24	112

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS

EMPLOYED DENTISTS

MEAN AND MEDIAN AGE BY GENDER AND DENTIST TYPE

	TYPE OF DENTIST								ALL-WEIGHTED			
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER				SPECIALIST							
	AGE				AGE				AGE			
	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N
GENDER												
MALE	36.8	32	83.3	80	50.1	51	164.7	16	38.1	34	85.7	96
FEMALE	32.6	31	16.7	16	.	.	.	0	32.6	31	14.3	16
ALL-WEIGHTED	36.1	31	100.0	96	50.1	79	100.0	16	37.3	33	100.0	112

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980

Most dentists graduating since 1980 (89.0%) are under the age of 35, while 9.2% are between the ages of 35 and 39 years, and only 1.7% are over 40 years of age.

The solo practice is the most prevalent practice size among recent graduates, with 46.0% working in a practice with no other dentist. About one-quarter (29.8%) practice with one other dentist, while another quarter, 24.2%, work in a practice with two or more dentists.

The mean age of all dentists graduating since 1980 is 30.6 years. This figure is the same for male and female practitioners.

Male practitioners comprise 86.7% of recent graduates, while female practitioners account for 12.3%.

Dentists graduating since 1980 work, on average, 44.8 hours per week in the practice, 34.4 of which are spent treating patients. The average number of weeks worked per year is 48.5. On an annual basis, 2174.7 hours are spent in the practice while 1668.8 hours are spent treating patients (about 76.7%).

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS

DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980

DENTIST AGE AND REGION DISTRIBUTION

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
AGE GROUP						
LESS THAN 30 YEARS	128	40.8	8	59.1	135	41.5
30-34 YEARS	150	48.0	5	36.4	155	47.5
35-39 YEARS	29	9.4	1	4.5	30	9.2
40-44 YEARS	5	1.4	0	0	5	1.4
45-49 YEARS	1	0.4	0	0	1	0.3
REGION						
NEW ENGLAND	14	4.3	1	9.1	15	4.5
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	58	18.4	3	22.7	61	18.6
SOUTH ATLANTIC	67	21.3	0	0	67	20.4
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	26	8.3	1	4.5	27	8.1
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	38	12.3	2	13.6	40	12.3
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	10	3.2	2	13.6	12	3.7
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	40	12.6	2	13.6	41	12.7
MOUNTAIN	12	4.0	1	9.1	14	4.2
PACIFIC	49	15.5	2	13.6	50	15.4

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS

DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980

SIZE OF PRIVATE PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER
PRACTICE SIZE						
NO OTHER DENTISTS (SOLOS)	46.04	144	45.45	6	46.02	151
ONE OTHER DENTIST	29.50	93	36.36	5	29.78	97
TWO OR MORE OTHER DENTISTS	24.46	77	18.18	2	24.20	79
ALL	100.00	314	100.00	13	100.00	327

MEAN HOURS SPENT IN PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL-WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
WEEKS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	48.51	278	47.14	22	48.45	300
HOURS PER WEEK SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	44.83	278	43.12	22	44.76	300
HOURS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	2180.18	278	2046.28	22	2174.72	300
HOURS PER WEEK TREATING PATIENTS	34.42	278	32.77	22	34.36	300
HOURS PER YEAR TREATING PATIENTS	1673.51	278	1557.55	22	1668.78	300

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS

DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980

MEAN AND MEDIAN AGE BY GENDER AND DENTIST TYPE

	TYPE OF DENTIST											
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER				SPECIALIST				ALL-WEIGHTED			
	AGE				AGE				AGE			
	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N
GENDER												
MALE	30.6	30	86.7	241	29.9	29	100.0	22	30.6	30	87.7	263
FEMALE	30.6	30	13.3	37	.	.	.	0	30.6	30	12.3	37
ALL-WEIGHTED	30.6	30	100.0	278	29.9	29	100.0	22	30.6	30	100.0	300

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The 1987 Survey of Dental Practice (SDP) was a condensed version of the long-form 1985 SDP. This short-form of the survey was sent to 4% of the dentists who were known to be actively engaged in the private practice of dentistry.

Sampling

The population consisted of 134,678 dentists who, based on the 1982 Distribution of Dentists, were known to be in private practice, even if only part-time.

The Distribution of Dentists is a dental census that is conducted periodically by the American Dental Association. Although the 1982 distribution is the most recent complete census, the sampling frame is updated by adding information about recent graduations, retirements, and deaths when available. Dentists with an unknown practice type were included in the sampling frame.

The sample was ordered by type of practice - general practitioner or specialist. Within each type, the sample was sorted by dental school and graduation year. A random sample from each type of practice was selected. Since specialists comprise a small percentage of the dental population it was necessary to oversample them to ensure adequate numbers for statistical analysis (i.e., the proportion of specialists sampled is higher than the actual percentage of specialists in the total population). It should be noted that the sample was drawn in such a way as to make statements about general practitioners and specialists as a whole. For any given specialty we may not have enough dentists responding to make reliable statements about that individual specialty.

Data Collection

The 1987 SDP was initially mailed in April 1987. Two follow-up mailings to non-respondents occurred in May and June 1987. A telephone follow-up to nonrespondents was conducted in July and August 1987. Coding, hand-editing, and computer processing were completed in September 1987. The final response rate was computed after the individuals who were either retired, disabled, deceased, not in private practice, or had unknown addresses were eliminated from the sample. The adjusted sample size was used to calculate the final response rate of 57.5%.

Weighting the Sample

Since the proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual percentage in the dental population, it is necessary to account for this imbalance when making statements about the total dental population. The correction is accomplished by developing and applying a weighting factor to each sampled dentist.

Weights were calculated for general practitioners and specialists separately, by dividing the percentage of each in the population by the percentage in the sample. The assumed proportion of general practitioners in the population is 85%, specialists, 15%. The percentage of general practitioners in the sample is 75.3%, specialists, 24.7%.

The weights were computed as follows:

General Practitioner	.85/.753 = 1.128818
Specialists	.15/.247 = 0.607287

These weights were employed in the calculations of means and medians for cases in which general practitioners and specialists were combined (i.e., when statements were made about "all" solo or independent dentists). The weights were also used when percentages of dentists in various categories were computed. The totals as well as the percentages are weighted, making the totals smaller or larger than those for the actual sample.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions of several terms and phrases are provided in this section to assist with the interpretation of data contained in the tables in this and other reports. In general, the dentists included in this report were working in private practice as a primary occupation. In addition, all dentists had started in their current (i.e., 1987) practice prior to 1986.

All Dentists: This group of dentists contains all dentists responding to the survey, including those who are employed by a dentist or dental practice.

Dental Practice Personnel (All Staff): This group includes dental hygienists, chairside assistants, dental laboratory technicians, secretary/receptionists, bookkeepers and other office personnel. Dentists employed by the practice are **NOT** included.

Full-Time and Part-Time: For purposes of this report, full-time was defined as working in the practice at least 32 hours per week. Part-time was defined as working in the practice less than 32 hours per week.

Hourly Salary: The hourly salary reported is computed by dividing the weekly salary by the number of hours worked.

Independent Dentists: All dentists who own or share in the ownership of a dental practice are independent dentists. This ownership status includes sole proprietorship, partnership and shareholders in an incorporated practice.

Mean: This is the simple average of values reported by the dentists responding to the survey. The mean is calculated by summing the values reported and then dividing the sum by the number of dentists reporting values.

Mean Per Year: This represents the average value reported for a year's period of time (e.g., mean number of appointments per year). The per year figures were determined by multiplying the per week values by the number of weeks worked that year.

Nonowner Dentists (Employed): This group includes all dentists who work in a dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage or associate basis.

Nonsolo Dentists: Nonsolo dentists work in a dental practice with at least one other dentist. Some of these dentists may be employed by the owner dentists in the practice.

No-Shows: The total of patient no-shows is defined as the difference between the number of appointments scheduled and the number of scheduled visits treated. It was assumed that the number of scheduled visits treated is equal to or less than the number of appointments scheduled.

Regions: The following is a breakdown of the states in each region.

New England: CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT
Middle Atlantic: NJ, NY, PA
East North Central: IL, IN, MI, OH, WI
West North Central: IA, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD
South Atlantic: DE, MD, DC, FL, GA, NC, SC, VA, WV
East South Central: AL, KY, MS, TN
West South Central: AR, LA, OK, TX
Mountain: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY
Pacific: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA

Scheduled Visits Treated: Scheduled appointments that were kept by the patients.

Solo Dentists: All dentists who work in private practice with no other dentists are solos. A solo dentist is also a sole proprietor or the only shareholder in an incorporated practice.

Total Patient Visits: Total patients visits is the sum of walk-in visits, emergency visits, and scheduled visits treated.

Weighting: Since specialists comprise a smaller percentage of the dental population, it was necessary to oversample them to insure adequate numbers for statistical analysis. The proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual proportion of specialists in the total population of dentists. Please note that individual specialties were not oversampled, and, therefore, only statistics on specialists as a group are presented. Statistics computed for All Dentists were weighted to reflect national proportions.

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1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

Please answer all questions by **circling** the number corresponding to the most appropriate response, except where a fill in the blank is requested.

1. Which of the following **best** describes your primary and/or secondary occupation(s) during 1986? Please circle **one** response for **EACH** column.)

	Primary Occupation	Secondary Occupation
a. Private practice (full- or part-time)	00	00
b. Dental school faculty/staff member	01	01
c. Armed Forces	02	02
d. Other federal services (e.g., VA, PHS)	03	03
e. State or local government employed	04	04
f. Hospital staff dentist	05	05
g. Intern/resident	06	06
h. Other student	07	07
i. Other health/dental organization staff member (e.g., NIDR)	08	08
j. Not in practice/retired	09	09
k. Occupation unrelated to dentistry	10	10
l. **NO SECONDARY OCCUPATION**	—	11

Please complete the remainder of this questionnaire if you were in **PRIVATE PRACTICE** during **ANY PART** of 1986 as:

1. a **PRIMARY** occupation, **OR**
2. a **SECONDARY** occupation, **OR**
3. both a **PRIMARY** and **SECONDARY** occupation.

If you were **NOT INVOLVED** in the **PRIVATE PRACTICE** of dentistry during any part of 1986 please **RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.** Thank you.

INDIVIDUAL DENTIST QUESTIONS

The following questions pertain to you as an individual private practitioner. If you changed practices (i.e., worked in more than one **PRIMARY** practice during 1986), please give information on the practice in which you treated patients for the greatest number of months.

2. Are you currently **ANNOUNCING** yourself and practicing as a specialist in an ADA recognized specialty area (dental public health, endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, oral pathology, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, or prosthodontics)?

Yes 1
No 2

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
3. In what year did you **FIRST** become associated with the primary/secondary practice where you practiced during 1986?	19 ____	19 ____

4. Which **ONE** of the following **BEST** describes your employment status when you **FIRST** became associated with that practice?

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice	1	1
b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership	2	2
c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice	3	3
d. Employed by an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder	4	4
e. Employed by an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis	5	5
f. Independent contractor	6	6
g. Other, please specify _____		

5. Which **ONE** of the following **BEST** describes your employment status in the practice(s) during 1986?

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice	1	1
b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership	2	2
c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice	3	3
d. Employed in an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder	4	4
e. Employed in an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis	5	5
f. Independent contractor	6	6
g. Other, please specify _____		

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
6. What was the zip code of your practice(s) during 1986?	_____	_____
	zip code	

7. Please indicate the following regarding patient care that **YOU PERSONALLY** provided during 1986?

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
The average number of:		
a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____	_____
	appointments per week	
b. **WALK-IN VISITS** per week that **YOU** treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled.) (If none, enter zero.)	_____	_____
	visits per week	
c. **EMERGENCY VISITS** per week that **YOU** treated (i.e., no appointment scheduled.) (If none, enter zero.)	_____	_____
	visits per week	
d. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that **YOU ACTUALLY** treated (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only	_____	_____
	visits per week	

8. Please answer the following about the time **YOU PERSONALLY** spent in the practice(s) during 1986.

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
a. Total number of weeks worked (excluding vacation)	_____	_____
	weeks	
b. Total number of **HOURS PER WEEK** spent in the practice	_____	_____
	hours per week	
c. Number of hours per week spent **TREATING PATIENTS** in the practice	_____	_____
	hours per week	

9. What was **YOUR** 1986 net income (after practice expenses and business taxes) from: (Please include salary, commission and/or dividends.)

	Net Income
a. Your primary practice	$ _____.00
b. Your secondary practice (if applicable)	$ _____.00
c. Other income from dentistry (i.e., teaching, research, other practice, etc.)	$ _____.00

If you were in private practice as a **PRIMARY OCCUPATION** during 1986, please continue.

If you were **NOT** in private practice as a **PRIMARY OCCUPATION** during 1986, **DO NOT CONTINUE.** Please return the questionnaire. Thank you.

ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE CHARACTERISTICS

10. **INCLUDING YOURSELF,** please indicate the number of full- or part-time **DENTIST POSITIONS** in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986. (If none, enter zero.)

	Number of Dentist Positions
a. Number of **OWNER** dentists (i.e., sole proprietor, partners, or shareholders)	_____
b. Number of **NON-OWNER** dentists (i.e., employed dentists, associates and non-shareholders) If none, enter zero	_____

11. Please indicate the number of full-time (32 hours per week or more) and part-time (less than 32 hours per week) **EMPLOYEE POSITIONS** in the **PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986. (If none, enter zero.)

	Number of Employee Positions	
	full-time	part-time
a. Dental hygienist(s)	_____	_____
b. Chairside assistant(s)	_____	_____
c. Secretary/receptionist(s)*	_____	_____
d. Dental laboratory technician(s)	_____	_____
e. Bookkeeper, business personnel	_____	_____
f. Other, please specify _____	_____	_____

***NOTE:** A secretary or receptionist who also provides chairside assistance at least 50% of the time should be counted as a chairside assistant.

12. Please provide the following for **EACH DENTAL HYGIENIST** in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986: If the practice did not employ someone in these positions, please check the appropriate box in the first column.

DENTAL HYGIENIST (S):	Not applicable (Please check boxes)	1986 ANNUAL Salary/ Commission (In dollars)	Weeks Worked in 1986	Hours Worked per Week	Length of Experience PRIOR to Employment in this Practice		Length of Employment in this Practice	
Position #1	☐	$ _____ per year	_____ weeks	_____ hours	_____ years	_____ months	_____ years	_____ months
Position #2	☐	$ _____ per year	_____ weeks	_____ hours	_____ years	_____ months	_____ years	_____ months
Position #3	☐	$ _____ per year	_____ weeks	_____ hours	_____ years	_____ months	_____ years	_____ months

13. Please provide the following regarding all dental hygienist(s) appointments and visits in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986:

The average number of:	Dental Hygienist(s)
a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week primarily for hygienist(s) treatment	_____ **appointments per week**
b. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that were actually treated by all hygienist(s)	_____ **visits per week**

14. Please indicate the following regarding patient care by the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986:

The average number of:	Entire Practice
a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week **(EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____ **appointments per week**
b. **WALK-IN VISITS** per week that were treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero	_____ **visits per week**
c. **EMERGENCY VISITS** per week (i.e., no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero	_____ **visits per week**
d. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that were **ACTUALLY** treated **(EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____ **visits per week**

15. Approximately what percentage of the patients who visited the primary practice in 1986:

	Entire Practice Patient Characteristics
a. were:	
14 years of age or younger	_____%
15 to 64 years of age	_____%
65 years of age or older	_____% **TOTAL 100 %**
b. were members of families whose annual income is estimated to be:	
under $10,000	_____%
$10,000 to 29,999	_____%
$30,000 or more	_____% **TOTAL 100 %**
c. were:	
covered by a private insurance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care	_____%
covered by a public assistance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care	_____%
not covered by an insurance program	_____% **TOTAL 100 %**
d. were members of a racial minority	_____%

16. During the entire year of 1986 indicate the **TOTAL** number of **DIFFERENT PATIENTS** treated by the **PRIMARY PRACTICE** _____ **different patients**

17. For the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986 how long did an average patient of record and average new patient have to **WAIT:**

	Entire Practice Waiting Time: patient of record	new patient
a. for the **INITIAL APPOINTMENT** of a series (excluding emergency cases)	_____	_____ **days**
b. to see a dentist **AFTER** the patient arrived for a **SCHEDULED** APPOINTMENT	_____	_____ **minutes**

18. In the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE,** what was the **total amount of fees charged** for the dental care provided during 1986 **(annual billing)**? $ _____.00

19. What percentage of the 1986 **GROSS RECEIPTS** were received: (If none, enter zero.)

	Gross Receipts
a. as direct patient payment	_____%
b. as payment from government programs (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, or other public insurance)	_____%
c. as direct payment from private insurance carriers	_____%
d. from other sources of payment (Please specify) _____	_____% **TOTAL 100 %**

20. During 1986, were any of the expenses of the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** (dental facilities or staff) shared with other dentists?

Yes 1
No 2

If you shared expenses (dental facilities or staff) with any other practice, please report **YOUR PRIMARY PRACTICE** expenses only.

21. For the following selected items, what were the **TOTAL PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES** for the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986? (If no expenses were incurred for specific items, please enter zero.)

	Expenses
a. Yearly rent	$ _____.00
b. Yearly mortgage (including interest)	$ _____.00
c. Total salaries, wages and commissions of non-dentists employees	$ _____.00
d. Commercial dental laboratory charges	$ _____.00
e. Dental supplies	$ _____.00
f. Advertising expenses	$ _____.00
g. Bad debts	$ _____.00

22. What were the **TOTAL PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES** of operating the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986? $ _____.00
(This figure should be greater than the sum of the figures in question 21.)

Thank you for your assistance in this important research project. Please return this questionnaire by folding and place tape as indicated. Drop it in the mail.